

Maryland SESAC

SPECIAL EDUCATION STATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE)
Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services
Early Childhood Intervention & Education Branch
200 W. Baltimore Street, 9th floor, Baltimore, MD 21201
(410) 767-0261

Rachel London, Esq., Chair

Mary Baskar, Vice Chair

SESAC General Meeting

Johns Hopkins University
Center for Technology in Education
Columbia, Maryland
10:45 a.m. – 1:45 p.m.
January 26, 2012

MINUTES

Attendance: Rachel London, *Chair*, Mary Baskar, *Vice Chair*, Dorie Flynn, Kelly Meissner, Pamela Hardy-Cyran, Marlo Lemon, Jackie Powell

Excused: Lorraine Costella, Clara Floyd, Eileen Watson, Rhonda Creecy

Guests: NA

Staff: Marcella Franczkowski, Sharon West, Donna Riley, Sheréa Makle

Ms. Baskar opened the meeting at 10:52 a.m.

I. Welcome/Introductions. Attendees introduced themselves.

II. Membership & Nominations

Jackie Powell requested a nomination form to provide to an interested partner. MSDE will send the nomination/application forms to ALL members.

III. Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA) Flexibility Waiver

- a. Ms. London thanked members for reviewing the SESAC comment letter regarding the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility Waiver, submitted to Dr. Bernard Sadusky, Interim State Superintendent of Schools, January 16, 2012.
- b. Ms. London stated that the SESAC is pleased by Maryland's decision not to change its "N" size of 5 and not to move to "super subgroups" when measuring accountability. (Ms. Franczkowski provided an ESEA Flexibility Waiver update during the Assistant State Superintendent's Update; see #VIII below.)

IV. SPP/APR Indicators Update

- a. Attendees reviewed the MSDE ***Status Report, Draft Preliminary Part B FFY 2010 (2010-2011) APR Indicator Performance At-A-Glance, January 6, 2012.***
- b. Donna Riley led the group in a discussion of Maryland's data.
- c. Maryland expects to submit the SPP/APR to OSEP 1/27/12 (due 2/1/12).
- d. Next reporting year (FFY 2011) may show a lower rate of graduation for students with disabilities, based on required formulaic changes regarding children who stay

beyond 4 years (measuring 4-year cohort/5-year cohort/6-year cohort vs. standard Lever rate).

- e. Ms. London asked if MSDE would consider taking the lead on student education to encourage students to stay in school and continue their education – even if it means being in school after peers have graduated. Ms. West stated that TA and support would be provided to parents to support their children in becoming self advocates.

V. Parent Survey Update (Indicator 8):

- a. Maryland's response rate for the current reporting period is approximately 10%.
- b. Maryland is creating a Parent Survey Task Force to focus on the process for getting surveys in the hands of parents, the response rate and quality of responses. SESAC members were encouraged to participate. A preliminary meeting is scheduled for 1/27/12 at MSDE to identify stakeholder groups that should be included on the Task Force.
- c. Kelly Meissner and Mary Baskar agreed to participate on the Task Force. Dorie Flynn agreed to suggest a parent of a child in a non-public school. Donna Riley agreed to contact the OSEP regarding sampling requirements set forth by the Federal government.
- d. Rachel London recommends that as many parents and parent organizations be invited to participate. The group provided additional recommendations.
- e. Ms. West stated that the group would be kept fairly intimate, however a broad stakeholder representation will be sought.
- f. Ms. West agreed to provide an update on Task Force development, along with an update on the Parent Survey vendor selection process at the next General meeting.

VI. Maryland Learning Links (MLL) Update: Ms. West led the group in an exercise to offer suggestions on how the SESAC can be included on the MLL website and how to link the SESAC with local Special Education Citizens Advisory Committees (SECACs).

- a. Goals:
 - Improved communication with and between the SESAC and local SECACs
 - SESAC information and priorities posted so that the public understands the groups' function
 - Improve parent involvement
 - Improve community involvement
 - Mechanism to attract/recruit new members and retain members
 - Post SESAC activities and share best practices for other operating committees
- b. Questions for Christie Timms/CTE:
 - Is there a way to have back-and-forth communication and sharing of what's happening between the SESAC and SECACs and among local SECACs. Could this be a closed community?
 - In addition to a permanent location on the Family and Community Channel, can the SESAC be linked to/from other channels?
 - Can a banner be posted to the MLL Home Page – "Coming Soon" ...information regarding Maryland's SESAC)
- c. Needs:
 - Contact information for local SECAC representatives to conduct a survey monkey to determine interest in having dedicated space on MLL

- d. Information to Post:
- Overview of SESAC: Purpose; membership forms, Bylaws; meeting dates, meeting minutes, etc.
 - Meeting Minutes (with links to more information regarding “hot topics” discussed at SESAC meetings)
 - Marlo Lemon can provide video, if needed (marlolem@hotmail.com)
 - Ms. London agreed to draft the overview description and send it out to members for review.
 - Ms. West agreed to send the notes from today’s activity to members before sending to Christie Timms to consider implementation of the requested items.

VII. Bullying

- Participants received a copy of ***Maryland’s Model Policy To Address Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation.***
- Charles J. Buckler, Director of Student Services and Alternatives Programs for MSDE was not able to attend today’s meeting. Therefore, the SESAC decided to table the topic of bullying. Ms. West agreed to contact Mr. Buckler to schedule a later presentation and to request any data and information available from the State.
- The SESAC wants to know how bullying of students with disabilities is being addressed at the State and local levels.
- One issue that continues to be raised is that individual schools do not always appropriately address bullying of students with disabilities.
- The SESAC suggests getting local school system’s bullying policies from local Special Education Citizens Advisory Committees and School Improvement Teams.
- The SESAC is interested in data from schools regarding bullying incidents. Ms. Baskar shared that her child’s school recently surveyed students regarding their view of bullying at the school.

VIII. Assistant State Superintendent’s Update: Ms. Franczkowski provided updates on the following items.

- ESEA Flexibility Wavier** – Participants received a copy of the January 24, 2012 Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA) Flexibility PowerPoint presentation to the Maryland State Board of Education. Key discussion points included:
 - The ESEA Flexibility Waiver is not separate from Race to the Top (RttT). These initiatives are aligned and work in tandem. Refer to the handout: *Maryland’s Third Wave of Reform: Timeline (Critical Elements)*.
 - Waiver, if approved, would cover 2 years; but will prepare Maryland for its work once ESEA is reauthorized. The DSE/EIS understands that there is work ahead of the State even if the Waiver is approved.
 - The MSDE hosted a stakeholder forum on January 11, 2012 for special education advocates; many SESAC members participated.
 - Draft application posted online at MarylandPublicSchools.org, public comment period ends 12 noon, February 9, 2012

Principle 1: Transitioning to College- and Career-Ready Standards and Assessments

- Summer Educator Effectiveness Academies: the DSE/EIS is advocating for special educators be “required” participants; currently principals may elect not

to select special educators for participation.

- 21 Priority Schools will be identified across the State (16 SIG schools and 5 additional Title I schools). Priority schools require systemic change.
- 41 Focus schools will be identified (10% of total of 412 Title Schools)
- 165 Rewards Schools will be identified. Current categories are: Rewards Schools, Distinguished Reward Schools, Superlative Schools, and Exceptional Reward Schools. Superlative Rewards schools will reward schools that have a 10-percentage point or less gap between “All Students” and the gap between the “All Students” and the ELL subgroup. Ms. London expressed a concern over using the gap between “all students” and the subgroups as a measure. Ms. Franczkowski stated that this could make a minimum difference on a school-by-school basis.

Principle 2: Sets AMOs to reduce by half the percentage of students in the “all students” group and in each subgroup who are not proficient with 6 years.

- Maryland Accountability Index: Each school will receive one index number for accountability.
- For grades 3-8, achievement, growth and gap will be measured. Could be exciting for special education and early intervention as the role of special education and early intervention is to narrow the gap to change the rate of growth and progress for a child receiving special education. The weight for each measurement has to be added.
- For grades 9-12, achievement, gap, and college-career readiness will be measured. Includes cohort graduation and dropout rates and attendance.
- Maryland’s “N” of 5 will remain the same. No super subgroup.

Principle 3: Evaluating and Supporting Teacher and Principal Effectiveness-Principal Evaluations

- State will have a “default” model; local school systems will have flexibility to work with local unions.
- SLOs = student learning objectives
- Ms. Franczkowski clarified that federal law does not clarify between child and students; for consistency Ms. Franczkowski will use the term “child” or “children”.

Ms. London thanked Ms. Franczkowski for her leadership in making sure the voices of special education advocates are being heard in this process.

b. Mod MSA for Grades 3-8

- The Mod-MSA program will be discontinued due to budget cuts and the need for Maryland to reassess the necessity of the modified assessment for students in special education who follow a Diploma track.
- Local Directors of Special Education have been notified that the Mod-MSA (grades 3-8) will no longer be provided, beginning with school year 2012-2013.
- DSE/EIS is working in partnership with the MSDE Division of Assessment, Accountability and Data Systems on next steps for assessment practices for children with disabilities.

c. Funding

- Non-Public schools will receive a 1% increase.
- Funding for Healthy Families *Home Visiting Program*, provided through Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) funds of \$4.2 million, have been cut in half. Ms. Franczkowski will hire a consultant to conduct a needs assessment to determine how to provide the remaining \$2 million to jurisdictions based on evidence-based practices and jurisdictions with the highest needs.

d. Legislative Update

- Ms. Franczkowski provided copies of Legislative update grids, *Legislative Session CY 2012, Assigned to Division of Special Education and Early Intervention Services, 1/24/2012, 2:40 PM*; and *Legislative Session CY 2012, Hearings of Interest, 1/24/2012, 1:55 PM*.
- Ms. London expressed that the SESAC is paying close attention to the following three legislative initiatives:
 - Unpaid leave for parents to attend Parent-Teacher Meetings
 - IEP Team Meeting 5-day Notice
 - Potential revisions to Schaefer v. Weast ruling to which party has the burden of proof in due process hearings
- Ms. London asked if the SESAC could get an update on legislative initiatives as they become available. Ms. Franczkowski stated that updates could be provided through Alice Harris' office. Ms. West will work closely with Ms. Harris to make sure SESAC is updated as appropriate.
- Next Friday, Ms. Franczkowski will present before local school superintendents and will share the presentation with the SESAC.

e. Birth Through 21 Leadership Meetings

- Ms. Franczkowski hosted her first all-day Leadership forum
 - Local Infants and Toddlers Program Directors and Preschool Special Education Coordinators met with Marcella in the morning.
 - Local Directors of Special Education met with Marcella in the afternoon.
 - All leadership, Birth – 21, came together during lunch for networking and a discussion of hot topics.
 - The revised Discretionary Grants program was described for all leaders. The new grants will be highly competitive; will be used to build 0-5 system of services; 3-21 system of services; or 0-21 system of services. External reviewers. Will be multiple-year grant.
- f. Ms. Franczkowski suggested that the SESAC consider the following PD opportunities for future SESAC meetings: Online IEP.
- g. Ms. Franczkowski assured the SESAC that if they have a concern they would like her to speak about, they can notify Ms. West and she would accommodate the request.

IX. Comments/Open Discussion

Let the record reflect that the Minutes from the November general meeting were reviewed and, through a vote conducted via email, were approved.

Ms. London adjourned the meeting at 1:20 p.m.